



Outrage

Sydney Field

Film Quarterly, Vol. 18, No. 3. (Spring, 1965), pp. 13-39.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0015-1386%28196521%2918%3A3%3C13%3AO%3E2.0.CO%3B2-A>

Film Quarterly is currently published by University of California Press.

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Outrage

SYDNEY FIELD

A PRINT "DOCUMENTARY" ON HOLLYWOOD FILM-MAKING

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The process of making movies in Hollywood is easy to ridicule, but it remains important to understand its nature—its complexities, its ambiguities, its strengths, its weaknesses. (And of course it is not fundamentally different from the movie-making process elsewhere.) About a year ago, when we began thinking of useful ways to document it, we cast about for a film project which would be fairly characteristic of current Hollywood operations on their better levels, and THE OUTRAGE seemed the most interesting then afoot. What we were concerned with was not, however, the qualities of the end-product; the point was to study how it was made. Sydney Field, a writer and associate producer on Wolper television documentaries, undertook to interview at length the men who had made the film. We expected, naturally, that the inquiry would have its own RASHOMON aspects; and we asked Field to interview the others associated with the film, to get their particular perspectives, before he talked to Ritt, whose directorial viewpoint would presumably provide a concluding over-view.*

Field received excellent cooperation from all concerned and was able to conduct his interviews shortly after the film was completed, while memories were still vivid. He has edited the tapes down (leaving out his own many questions) to the versions below. From the raw materials which follow, we hope the reader may discover something of the "truth" of contemporary Hollywood.

Jean Renoir once commented that the film should not be considered an art, in the classical sense, because one man does not command absolute control over his medium. The film-maker is not like the individual artist working on a novel or painting or symphony, because he is dependent upon other people, either to contribute ideas or to execute his own. Even for the most dedicated *auteurs*, men like Welles, or Hitchcock, Renoir was not exaggerating, and of course the impersonal Hollywood "style" speaks for itself.

There are only rare exceptions when the Hollywood film fails to elicit howls of frustration from the critics. Even so, most of us still cling to the belief that the day will come when Hollywood will make films that are vital and dynamic and honest and personal; films that come to grips with life as it is, not as it is envisioned from behind the massive barricades of a Beverly Hills mansion. But these hopes and dreams are forever being shattered when

we come face to face with today's "product." We learn to resign ourselves like Miniver Cheevy to just shake our heads, "call it fate, and go on drinking." But our perennial optimism was awakened again when production began on *The Outrage*. Despite the proverbial jinx of the remake, this one had the potential of a fine film. The story was taken from the play *Rashomon*, which was an adaptation of Kurosawa's film masterpiece. The film was to be directed by Martin Ritt, one of Hollywood's ablest directors. Included in the cast were gifted performers: Paul Newman, Claire Bloom, Laurence Harvey, Edward G. Robinson. James Wong Howe, one of the finest cameramen in the world, was to photograph the film; and the score was to be composed by Alex North, an outstandingly original composer.

But when the film was released, it was received with a vehement chorus of condemnation, mixed with a few notes of equally ardent praise. It was branded "an Outrage" because it had the audacity to transpose the Japanese elements of *Rashomon* into an American Western. It was scorned for being "an Outrageous imitation"; *Time* termed it "a slick, shallow olio of rape, murder and violence." Though it was also hailed as "a new-wave film done with Hollywood professionalism" (whatever that means), the serious critics all but avoided it, and perhaps pretended it did not exist.

In reality *The Outrage* is not a great film, it is not even a really good film, but it is not a bad one either. If anything, it falls into that category of limbo, the interesting failure. The comedy sequence, as told through the eyes of the prospector, is much too broad, much too farcical. The scenes set at the railroad station (the transposition of the *Rashomon* Gate) are marred by a phony set, bad dialogue, and (with the exception of Robinson) bad acting. The only redeeming virtue of these scenes is the slow, moody camera which accentuates the loneliness and isolation of the priest, the prospector, and the con man. But the film suddenly surges into life in the desert sequences, with their harsh, austere photography, the dynamic editing heightening the contrasts of mood with a liquid, relentless flow of imagery. Moments in these sequences rank among the very best in American film-making.

The interviews which follow attempt to shed some much-needed light on the perilous and complex course a film follows to reach its finished state.

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THE WRITER

A film, like any creative endeavor, begins with an idea, a desire to transform a personal vision into a reality. In THE OUTRAGE, this initial impulse came from the writer, Michael Kanin. Winner of an Academy Award for the screenplay of WOMAN OF THE YEAR, he has also written THE CROSS OF LORRAINE, RHAPSODY, and A DOUBLE LIFE. His plays have appeared on Broadway, and his new play, THE WHITE QUEEN, is scheduled to open this fall.

The *Outrage* had its inception a number of years ago with a chance remark after my wife and I had seen the Japanese film, *Rashomon*. We admired it very much, but as we left the theater it seemed to me we'd just seen a play that had been made into a superb motion picture. Only three basic sets were used: the forest, the court, and the Rashomon Gate. And the more we thought about it, the more enthusiastic we became about the idea of *actually* adapting this film for the Broadway stage. We negotiated for almost two years before we could obtain the rights to the film, as well as to the two short stories on which the film was based. (These were written by Ryunosuke Akutagawa, whose work has provided a good deal of source material for Kurosawa.) We also obtained a cutting continuity script of the picture. And that was such a startling surprise, that we almost dropped the whole idea. Though the film had seemed like a photographed play, the continuity script told us quite another story. True, while there *were* only three major locales, the film was treated so cinematically, so stylistically, with such a minimum of dialogue, the whole thing fell through our fingers. There were pages and pages of shots describing a man running through a forest, which were meaningless for the purposes of a stage play. There was very little dialogue that could be used. And we realized we would have to start back at the beginning, basically with the original source material to build our play. To a great extent, it turned out to be an original play, based on the general patterns set by the Japanese short stories and film.

We had a tremendous cast, a fine production,

and the play was very well received on Broadway. However, because of the heavy running expenses, it had what today is considered a limited run of about six months. What's interesting, though, is that the audiences, particularly the younger age groups, were much intrigued with the ideas presented. We received many intelligent letters discussing the substance of the story—the nature of truth. The locale was Japan and most of the audience was unfamiliar with the legend, but that didn't matter at all. It was the *ideas* which they found interesting. And it was this basic interest which led us to the conclusion that the material could be made to reach much more widespread audiences than those of the art houses and the stage. We were convinced that the movie-goers of the English-speaking world would respond and be enchanted with a philosophical concept of this sort, if it were done well and with theatrical effectiveness.

I began by searching for a key to the adaptation that would keep it close to the original and yet have its own individuality. There were many ways this could be done. The story itself is timeless; it could be told in almost any locale or period with equally good results. But two ways seemed to be the most effective. One was to do it as a contemporary story, set in the Middle East. A few years ago (in Iran, I believe) a notorious bandit killed an American envoy and his wife who were riding in a jeep. This suggested a wonderful jumping-off place, because there was much speculation about the bandit's motives. Was he just a bandit, a rebel patriot, a guerrilla fighter, a communist? Nobody quite knew.

The other idea was much purer—to set it in the early West. For the West transposed itself perfectly in every respect. It was a time of legends, of great heroes, that are vibrant to this day. The Mexican bandit comes right out of our own history: the Cisco Kid, Juan Murieta, Pancho Villa, all the Mexican bandits who roamed back and forth across the Texas border. It was easy to transpose the samurai and his wife into fallen, Southern aristocrats. Thousands of Southerners migrated to the West after

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the Civil War. Their lives broken, their holdings lost, they came to seek out a new life. The Buddhist priest became a minister. The cynical wigmaker became an old-time con man. It all “worked.” In fact, *Rashomon* might have been written originally as a Western.

And so, *The Outrage* was to be a Western. And, as such, it needed to be broadened, opened up, taking advantage of the natural beauty of our Southwest. Obviously, this version had to be done with much more vigorous colors and strokes; not in the pale, beautiful, and subtle Japanese tones.

But, adapting the play back into a film was a knotty problem. The two media are different in their needs, their demands, their technical resources. Many plays turned into films have been butchered by reverence. A producer will spend half a million dollars for the rights to a play and insist that, for that investment, the property should not be “tampered with.” He’ll treat it like a Tiffany jewel. Please, he’ll say, don’t take a chip out of it. The results generally have been disastrous. Plays are written to be expressed in words and limited action. Motion pictures, quite simply, are pictures that move. They have to be done visually. The story has to move, not only with a forward thrust but from place to place to sustain interest. Nothing is more important in a film than the underlying story line, its forward movement. It’s like getting on a roller coaster. It goes somewhere—up, down, around, always moving, always going somewhere. That’s what holds the audiences’ attention, and makes for a dynamic and interesting film.

After the play opened on Broadway, a number of people expressed interest in doing it as a film. But many felt that the financing would be difficult and the audience limited. One major studio questioned the philosophical overtones. The fact that we told four different stories, then knocked them down, saying truth is relative, was a disturbing concept. They didn’t feel the audiences would accept it. They said they would buy it, however, if we would change the concept—make it into a who-done-it, a sort of guessing game in which one of the



Paul Newman, whose participation made the project viable, as the bandit.

stories turned out to be the whole truth. Of course, we could not agree to this. And so, the motion picture rights to the play were not sold for about six years.

Ronald Lubin knew the property, and for a number of years we had discussed the prospects of making it into a film. He suggested that if a screenplay were written it would be easier to sell. Finally, I decided the time had come when the screenwriter in Hollywood had to be a little bit more adventurous. So I wrote the screenplay. Lubin showed it to Marty Ritt, who was interested. And the project was on its way.

As the pre-production planning began, Marty had a number of ideas which were incorporated into the script. A great many decisions had to be made and, since we were working in close proximity, we could resolve them fairly easily. One of the biggest decisions was whether or not to use the baby at the end of the film. I thought perhaps a different ending, one which hadn’t been done before, might be better. We were attempting to reach a large audience, and I felt a more clear, less symbolic, ending might be helpful. So I experimented and wrote a few variations. But the consensus of opinion was that we were better off if we stuck to the original. Many reviewers resented the use of the baby at the end. They thought it offered no resolution, that it was tacked on as a convenient *deus ex machina* device.

The original Japanese film, *Rashomon*, directed by Kurosawa, was made in 1950, when the impact of the atomic bomb was terribly and keenly alive. The use of the baby was a simple symbolic idea—that out of death and destruction emerges newborn life. To the Japanese, it was a highly meaningful comment to make. And we all decided that it was still a meaningful comment to make. It is timeless and universal. The violence of our world, its injustices, cruelties, agonies—man's inhumanity to man—causes most of us to become pessimistic at times, to lose hope. But, just as the preacher in the film rediscovers, there is a basic goodness and worth in mankind which, like the candle in the wind, must be remembered, appreciated, kept alive. In short, we must never give up hope.

Many people do not understand how vital and necessary the relation between writer and director is in the making of a film. I firmly believe that the closer and more harmoniously they can work together throughout the production, the better. Only in that way will they be able to incorporate into the script a set of mutually acceptable solutions to whatever problems may arise on the set. When the director arrives on the set, there is another element he has to face. For it may be that for one reason or another, the way the scene is written, and the way the scene plays, do not express the intent of what should be stated. In that case, the problem must be resolved either by improvising, or rewriting, or even restructuring the entire scene. But if the director and writer have worked closely together, the director will be able to improvise without doing any violence to the mutually agreed-upon idea. This is why the director's contribution should begin during the conception and writing of the script—just as the writer's contribution should continue until the final completion of the film. It is just as idiotic to ignore the writer when shooting begins, as it would be for a writer to shut himself off from the director's creative ideas during the words-on-paper period. On Broadway, it would be unthinkable for a writer

not to be an integral part of the production from the inception to opening night. In the movies, the fullest contribution a writer can make is, more often than not, untapped.

On *The Outrage*, I was a member of the independent company that made the film, functioned as associate producer, and was thus privileged to be "in" on the proceedings from beginning to end.

Marty and I entered the production of the film in substantial agreement about it. But, as always, there were some things that didn't work out as we had planned. One was in the first reel of the picture—the scene at the railroad station. It was shot on the sound stage with simulated rain. Location shooting was out of the question because, obviously, we couldn't put in a request for rain on such and such a day. Even on the set, Marty wanted to be as realistic as possible, to shoot it with the actors talking against the rain as if we were on location. He was assured by the sound technicians that everything would be fine. But later, we found it wasn't good enough. The levels between the rain and the voices were almost the same pitch, and it took some effort to hear the dialogue. We knew that if the audience had to strain to hear what's happening in the first reel, then the unusual story which unfolds thereafter would be almost incomprehensible. We tried it out at some previews, but it was apparent that it would hurt the picture, so we had to loop almost the entire first reel.

Another problem existed in the husband's story, told through the Indian. In the Japanese film, it was entirely supernatural—a medium was summoned to the court to bring back the voice of the dead man from the spirit world. But a Western is much too realistic, and we simply couldn't inject the supernatural element. So, we assumed that the old Indian had come upon the husband in the woods while he was dying of his stab wound, and had heard the husband's version of the story just before he expired. At the trial, he intones some ancient Indian incantations, saying he wants to summon the spirit of the dead man to "help me tell true." He starts to recall the dead man's words

but his memory fails him. As he gropes to remember, the husband's voice is heard, presumably as it recurs in the Indian's memory. This gave us a realistic approach to it, with the slight overtone of the supernatural. Another aspect of it was a problem, too. The old Indian's incantations, combined with his halting ritualistic dance turned out to be rather comical to the pragmatic American audience. And so, to eliminate this distortion of our intention, we had to cut out a considerable portion of very interesting footage.

There was one sequence with which I felt we might have gone a bit further. The whole story revolves about a rape. Because of it, there is inevitably a strong sensual element inherent in the plot. I had written the husband's sequence with strong sexual overtones, particularly after he has witnessed his wife's seduction. He says, "Never did I see my wife look like that before." The bandit kneels, telling the wife that they can go away together, explains what kind of a life they will lead, and so on. And the wife turns and kisses him. I felt she should be shown at her most lustful, in order to justify the husband's lines. However, Marty staged it more delicately, with the kiss partially obscured by a tree.

How can you know whether your ideas would be more effective than the director's? The truth is, you never know. In the one case, the scene is made up of words on paper—your judgment, your guess. In the other case, it is realized on film and tested with an actual audience. Occasionally, when budget permits, more than one version of a scene is shot and tried out. Then you know. Otherwise, it is usually the director's version which is done. This is the way it is, and must be, in commercial movie-making. One man must make the final decisions. If a writer wants that final authority, and is willing to do the work and accept the responsibility, he becomes the director of his own work. A number of writers in Hollywood have done this very successfully—Billy Wilder, George Seaton, Delmar Daves, Panama and Frank Richard Brooks, and others.

During the previews, there was some con-

cern that the audiences seemed to accept the prospector's story as being the true version of what really happened. Even though the con man says to the prospector, "You're a lying hypocrite, just like all the rest," some of the audience overlooked the line. We felt that there should be no mistake about this. So I had to add a line during the fight between the prospector and con man to emphasize further that this story, like the others, is not the whole truth.

What is the truth of the motion picture? As I see it, the truth is that there is no such thing as absolute truth. Truth is a many-faceted diamond. Hold it up to the light and it has various appearances. But it's the one diamond. In a broad philosophical sense, I believe that none of the four different versions of the story in *The Outrage* is a deliberate lie. All the stories are true, but each contains only a *part* of the truth—the truth as one person can see it. It's like the ancient fable of the three blind men and the elephant. Colorfully and lucidly, the fable points out that each man is right, but only within the context of his limited knowledge. Each can sense only part of the whole.

In *The Outrage*, all four people tell their stories from their own points of view. But stand above, see the whole landscape, as it were. You find that it is the combination of all the stories which represents the closest thing to the *whole* truth. Each character is the amalgam of many things; he is great and small,

*A pre-shooting planning conference:
Ritt, Bloom, Newman, Harvey*



noble and mean, heroic and cowardly, simple, yet filled with contradictions. This is what the preacher learns at the end—about himself as well as the others. He realizes that it was wrong to forget the all-important flashes of goodness and greatness in mankind, cowardly to run away from his world and his sacred task. And, learning this “ultimate truth,” refreshed by it, he goes back to be once again a man among men—to rejoin the frail but noble human race.

THE PRODUCER

Not too long ago, Jerry Wald succinctly described the function of the Hollywood producer: “A producer,” he stated, “is the man who stands on top of the heap and controls everything.” Wald did just that.

In contemporary Hollywood, this attitude still exists, but it is far rarer. Today, the term “producer” is clouded in mystery and ambiguity. Generally speaking, the producer should be the man responsible for raising the money so that a picture can be made. But that is all. He should not demand final artistic control.

One cannot deny the importance of these men; one can only take issue with what they stand for if they decide to bellow myopic standards of kitsch and masscult to the American audience. Without their ability to gather the vast resources of capital, the American cinema, whatever its shortcomings, would not exist. In their own way, they are as essential as the creative talent.

A. Ronald Lubin is a producer at MGM. He is now producing ARMAGEDDON, MILA 18, and SIMON BOLIVAR.

As a producer, I look for certain things in a property before I even consider doing it as a film. To me, they are selling points, because they are the elements which attract the financing. They vary with each script, not only in kind, but in degree. In one case, it may be the story; another might be the interest of certain stars appearing in the film; another might be that a director wants to do the property. But it's up to me to be able to sift through the property and see what these selling points might be. I like a property that is intellectually exciting, perhaps even controversial. But these

elements should be combined within the fabric of a good action story. For then, the story is always moving toward a climax, and the audience is interested in how it will come out. But while I may look for this type of property, I may not find them. They're few and far between. In Hollywood today, the emphasis seems to be on the epic, and situation comedy. I've always tried to associate myself with films that mean something, that try and make people sit up in the theater and think about what they have just seen. I felt that way when I first saw *Rashomon*, some twelve years ago. I wondered then, why can't Hollywood make films like this? Later, when I saw Michael and Fay Kanin's play *Rashomon* on Broadway, it stimulated me enough to try and see what the chances were of making this into a movie. It's a dramatic story, intellectually stimulating, and I felt it could be tailored to reach a very large audience.

I contacted Michael Kanin and broached the idea to him. But he wasn't too interested. He wanted to produce it himself. But this didn't faze me too much. Everybody says no at first. You just have to wear them down. But I felt this way: if I could help him make this into a film he would be happy, and I would be too. So I went around to certain people at the studios, and to certain actors, and proposed the idea to them without even having the right to do so. To my surprise, these people were interested, but there was always something which killed the idea. People had commitments, and without anything tangible, the studios were rather reluctant. Perhaps it was the wrong time, or the wrong place, or the wrong approach to make the film at this particular time. But I personally believed in the film, and I vowed that someday, somehow, and somewhere, I would make this film. Maybe my interest stemmed from the fact that I was a philosophy major in college, I don't know. But the basic fact that this is an entertaining story which states quite lucidly that truth is relative, that there is no single kind of truth, fascinated me then, as it does now. Joseph Conrad once remarked that good and evil are

the same except in the fabric of experience. He knew, and Akutagawa knew, that man is really a bundle of contradictions. He's both good and evil, large and small. But this type of preaching rarely comes across unless it's in some kind of powerful, dramatic form. And, of course, from the producer's point of view, the financial returns from a commercially successful film are quite substantial.

So, I went back to Kanin, and said, in effect, let me take this off your hands and try and package it for you. That's my job. I take an idea, gather up the diverse elements, and channel them into one solid unit. I told him he's got a dead duck, but I wanted to fly it for him. It was a dead property, from his standpoint, because it had been rejected so many times. But I still believed it could be done. Whether it would be a low-budget film of about \$400,000 made in Spain without any stars, or a large spectacle, didn't matter too much. Rather reluctantly, he agreed to let me try and package the idea. So, once more, I went back to the studios and offered them the property. As before, they turned me down, even cautioned me by saying, no don't make this film, it's too off-beat, too strange. Well, that just reinforced my desire. I had nothing to sell except the idea. That failed. So I had to take a new approach. I've learned that only by persistence will you accomplish anything substantial. I failed for years before I packaged *Spartacus*, or *Paths of Glory* as an agent, or produced *Billy Budd*. So I went back to Michael, and said if I had a screenplay the chances of selling the idea would be greatly improved.

Michael agreed, and we sat down and discussed the film. He told me his ideas of putting the story in the Middle East, or making it a melodrama, or a Western. I, myself, wanted a Western, because a Western is more lucrative and it would be more readily acceptable.

When the screenplay was about half completed, I could see everything was working. The whole idea had solidified into something that had style, and quality. I thought it was in sufficient shape to try and sell the film just

on the basis of this half-finished script. So I took this, and sent it to Marty Ritt. I knew he was looking for something powerful to do, and he is always careful in selecting his properties. I felt the script offered him those things he likes in a story. Marty was my first choice because I felt he could infuse the film with strength and vitality while still retaining the intellectual concepts.

Marty liked it, and said if the second half were as good as the first half, he would do the film. With Marty almost committed, I was certain I could get the financing. There was always the possibility, with this type of film, that his name alone wouldn't be enough to get all the backing. But I knew he could attract enough players to take part in the film so the problem of money was greatly reduced. Now, I went back to the studios. Because I had an allegiance to Columbia, I felt obligated to present it to them first. I was promptly turned down. Marty had a commitment at Fox, but they also refused. Both studios gave the same reasons for their rejection. Basically, they felt the property had been around too long, that it would be uncommercial. And now something else happened; Paul Newman, after first refusing to do the film, changed his mind. Now, with Marty Ritt and Paul Newman, the chances of success were almost positive. So I took the package to MGM and Paramount. I did this simply because we wanted the security of knowing that two studios might be interested. Newman made the whole thing viable, for he's considered to be the best box-office attraction in the world. And both studios made us an offer. Now, the roles became reversed. Suddenly, we stood on top. We chose MGM over Paramount because they put up more money faster, and gave us the best terms, including the artistic control over the film. They gave us a budget of \$3.2 million, a good solid figure, and offered us certain stars.

They suggested Sophia Loren for the girl's part. Any producer would be happy to have her in his film. She's not only talented, but she's also a tremendous box-office attraction. But we felt she wasn't right for the part. The



Claire Bloom

role is extremely demanding, for it carries the etchings of four entirely different personalities. If these characterizations didn't come across, the film wouldn't make sense. What girl could be so plastic that in the first episode she would be seen as a rare, fragile flower, yet in a later episode possess the harsh qualities of a prostitute? Loren couldn't play the first episode, only the very sexy one. And Claire Bloom, we felt, was the best actress who could play the part. Besides having done the play on Broadway, she was physically right for all the twists and turns and nuances which the script demanded. Some people criticized us for choosing a girl who really isn't a great box-office draw. We didn't care. We wanted the girl who could do the best job.

But the real casting problem turned out to be the husband's role. Hollywood is a town of bruised, inflated, and tattered egos. This may sound somewhat stupid, but the billing a

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star is to get often plays an important part as to whether or not the actor will accept the role. Because the story concerns two men and a woman, the husband would have to take third billing. It's literally amazing that some actors are more concerned over where their name will appear on the screen than on the part itself. Then, there was the size of the part. Throughout most of the film the husband is tied to a tree. He cannot use most of the tools an actor usually works with. Many actors refused the part. Yet Marty and I felt there was something in this role which would make the right actor see that these apparent minus qualities in the script could be channeled into a plus quality. We wanted an actor to say to us, the hell with the old clichés, they just don't apply in this situation. Laurence Harvey was the only actor who had the integrity, the guts, and the belief in the film, to take a chance and make something of the husband's part. I have the greatest respect for him because of it. It just illustrates the myopic vision of some people in Hollywood.

Once I had managed to acquire the financing, the time had come for me to step aside and let Marty take over the entire artistic control of the film. It's like a relay team. A man runs his quarter of a mile, then passes the baton to the next runner. I wouldn't have it any other way. In most cases, the producer usually has the final artistic control. And even though this is what my contract reads, I made it known to Marty that his voice would prevail in any difference of opinion. It was understood that if I happened to disagree on certain things, he would listen to my suggestions, weigh them and then let his own sense of what's right or wrong guide him in the final decision. This way we were always able to reach an agreement on how something should be done.

There was some disagreement on the comedy sequences. We've been criticized for making this one section of the film too broad, too comic. I wanted the scene to be as funny as possible. Michael Kanin thought it shouldn't be too funny because the entire picture might

be over-balanced. But I feel this way: if you have almost twenty minutes of continuous laughter, it can't be that wrong. But people have disagreed about this sequence; many like it, many dislike it.

At first, I was somewhat concerned over the abrupt changes from time present to time past. I'm fairly certain that to many people the cutting from flashback to flashback might be somewhat jolting. But jolting in an exciting and dynamic way, not necessarily a confusing way. I thought dissolves should be used as a means to soften the transitions. But Marty didn't agree. And now, looking at the finished product, I agree with him. They would have been used as a conventional device, nothing more. And we wanted this film to be unique.

Looking back, I see that we might have handled things a bit differently. At the time, we felt we were right in taking the direction we did. The reviews have either been very good, or very bad. A lot of critics have just chosen to ignore it. There are fine things in this film which have never been mentioned: the editing, Jimmy Wong Howe's superb photography, Marty's direction, the acting. As of now, the film is drawing well. In time, I think the film will bring back a good return. The story, after all, is taken from an accepted classic. Paul Newman is a very talented actor. It has a fine title, and a great action struggle of life and death. For most of the American audience, the title *The Outrage*, the element of rape, and a life-and-death struggle, are very commercial ingredients.



DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Few cinematographers have equaled the reputation of James Wong Howe, whose contributions to the American film include BODY AND SOUL, SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS, BELL, BOOK AND CANDLE, ROSE TATTOO, THE LAST ANGRY MAN, THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA, and HUD. Howe has just returned from Mexico where he filmed THE GLORY GUYS; next he will begin work on John Frankenheimer's GRAND PRIX.

Marty Ritt and I got along very well when we made *Hud* together. When he told me he was going to do a film based on the play *Rashomon*, I was interested, yet doubtful. I had seen *Rashomon* a number of years ago, and thought it a lovely film. When I read the script of *The Outrage*, then called *Judgment in the Sun*, I was impressed. But then when Marty and I ran Kurosawa's film, I was literally floored. It was suddenly as if I had seen it for the first time. It was a beautiful film in every way. When the lights came on in the projection room, Marty and I kind of looked at each other and laughed. How, I thought, were we going to make a picture that's better than this? Marty felt the same way, but as we began talking about what we could do with such plastic material, we both became very excited. We knew that remaking this film would be a great challenge. There were two reasons why *The Outrage* appealed to me. One was the challenge of doing something different with the material; the other was that it gave me the opportunity to work with Marty Ritt again. I knew he would give the film all he had, both in ideas and artistry. I consider him one of the finest directors around. But I knew *The Outrage* would be a very controversial film, one that a lot of people would like, as well as dislike. And I felt the critics would be laying for us because of their reverence for *Rashomon*. But this, to me, was part of the challenge.

After carefully reading the screenplay, I thought that we could use the Southwest sun to our advantage, perhaps shoot the entire film using back light. I discussed this with Marty,

◀ James Wong Howe

and he agreed, but he felt we should wait until we were actually on location before we made any final decisions. As we talked, I tried to visualize Marty's ideas in photographic terms. I believe that the director and cameraman should work very closely together, to find out the various ways of reading between the lines of the script, perhaps expand the story to capture a certain mood. The beginnings of a film are more or less like the beginnings of an orchestration. For, after I talk with the director, I get together with the art director and get his ideas on how he's going to build the sets. Only in this way can I orientate myself in the direction the film might be following. I get an idea of certain things I can do, and ferret out any ideas that may not work.

I wanted to use the sun as much as possible in this film. I knew that if I did this there would be many problems. But I thought I might have the chance to solve a lot of them by shooting the picture using infra-red stock. It's a dangerous film to use because you don't know what it will do—Eastman cannot give you an ASA reading on it, and the only way you can get any kind of a reading on it at all is by shooting your own tests. Even then, the results are erratic, but I still wanted to try it. Newman was playing a Mexican bandit, but he has blue eyes. To make his eyes go dark is relatively simple with the infra-red film, for this stock makes blue turn out black. When we shot the tests though, he was wearing his Mexican make-up which was a dark reddish color, and we found that his eyes went dark all right, but his skin complexion turned out to be a pale white. But as it turned out, we didn't have the time to pursue this any further, so I dropped the whole idea. I haven't give up the idea of using this stock, and one of these days I hope to be able to make a complete picture using infra-red film. But it will have to be a subject that can utilize this effect, and not be used as a device. But this is the way you begin to get your ideas, by trying things. They may work, or they may not, but it's always important to try them. This is why it's so important to talk these things over with the director.

But while you may visualize certain things in advance, the only real way you can see what you are going to have to cope with happens right there—on the set. We get the actors together and they rehearse the scene. At this time a lot of things that look good on paper, and read well, may not play well, either in the staging or in front of the camera. Above all, the action must be played smoothly, moving in a certain direction. So many things are shot out of sequence that everyone concerned with the film has to know where they are at all times. Like Shakespeare said, the action must fit the words, and the words must fit the action. If it doesn't, then you have to change one or the other. But any time you change it will affect the lighting, in some degree, because the action always determines the lighting. I can never arbitrarily say that I'm going to light a scene in such and such a way because the lighting must fit the scene. If anyone becomes aware of the lighting, it isn't right. So, I always have to conform with the action. It all revolves around the story. We're subservient to it, it dictates what we have to do, and we can never forget it. The minute we do we're going to find ourselves going in different directions, and then nothing will fit together.

As Marty is rehearsing the scene, I think over the various ways I might photograph it. After he's finished with the actors, and everything is staged, I walk around and select the best way to photograph it in the simplest way. That's what both Marty and I aim for, simplicity of action, the isolation of things we don't want to interfere. In *The Outrage* we were in the desert. We couldn't cut down the cactus because we were in a national forest, so we had to rearrange the scene as best we could. Sometimes in this rearrangement for the camera, it becomes necessary to rearrange the action so the actors can remain free. We can never restrict the actors, for they are the direct lines of communication to the audience. Everyone must be flexible on the set. That, in itself, is part of the enormous limitations and compromise which all film-makers face. In fact, after doing many films, you automatically come

to accept them. For instance, during the wife's trial scene, the Panavision lens we used had so many elements in it that when we shot into the sun we had a tremendous number of reflections. The only way I could compensate was to place a large piece of plate glass, about 5 or 6 feet square, in front of the camera. It was just large enough to give the actors enough latitude for their action. They could move, but only up to a certain point. Then I sprayed a neutral-density color paint on the glass, a gray, and then toned it down for the correct lighting. In this way we were able to get the shot the way Marty wanted it. Above all, if I were to say what the cameramen's function is, I would say that it's to give the director and actors as much freedom as possible.

This same principle applies whether it's a difficult shot or a choice of angles. I choose my angles because of certain light factors which will enhance the scene. But it may not work for Marty; he may have certain things required for his action. Other times he may not like the angle and then we go with his set-up. When that happens I have to adjust my lighting, and many times it works out better. Sometimes it doesn't. But it always creates other problems. But I'm there to solve my problems, and work them out for the director. The same thing applies to the actors. I can't put down tape marks and say, look, you must get your toe right on that mark at this particular moment. If you do that, the actor's going to worry about getting his toe on the mark at that moment. But what about his performance? In *The Outrage*, I told Paul Newman to forget about the camera and play the scene anyway he wanted. We have pan handles, tilt handles, and so on, and I made sure that he was free in every way to express himself. If he wants to throw his hands up in the air I don't want the camera operator to say "I'm sorry, but I cut him off at the wrists." I didn't want Paul to do the scene without throwing his hands up in the air, or have to remember to pull them in so many inches. How can you make a picture that way? I will not restrict anybody. If we can't get the shot the way the actor is playing

the scene, then I have to back the camera up another foot or two just to give him that freedom to work. That's the only way you can make pictures. If the camera is supposed to run with the action, you have to *find* a way to run with the action. It's the ability to adapt to the situation which becomes so vital and important. Being a photographer is not just going out there with a light meter and seeing how many foot-candles you have, or what beautiful low angles you can get. You've got to say what is this story about, who are these people, and what is the story trying to say. We know, for example, who Paul Newman is, but he's trying to create another character. Now I have to go along with him, and try to make that character become alive. I can't say I'm going to light the picture with a lot of shadows, or play the dark tones off against the white ones. The result would be a mish-mash. There wouldn't be any form. That's the one thing about photography—you must never lose your form. Many photographers think that in order to separate somebody from the background they have to use a backlight. It's false. You can separate things by using different light values. If you want to keep the foreground light, you keep a darker background, and vice versa. But you must always remember, whatever the circumstance, to retain your form; it must never be lost.

There were times during the filming of *The Outrage* when it was hard to keep the form because of certain effects the writer had written into the script. When the Indian is telling the husband's story, we had to sustain this rather weird, supernatural mood, yet retain enough form by lighting contrasts and definition to allow the audience to understand what they are seeing. When I read the sequence I thought I would use the widest-angle lens the Panavision camera has. I call it the "bug-eye" because the field of vision and depth of field is so great that around the edge of the frame there is a great deal of distortion. In this instance, I thought it could be used to our advantage, and be very effective. In the scene where Laurence Harvey is dying, we hear him

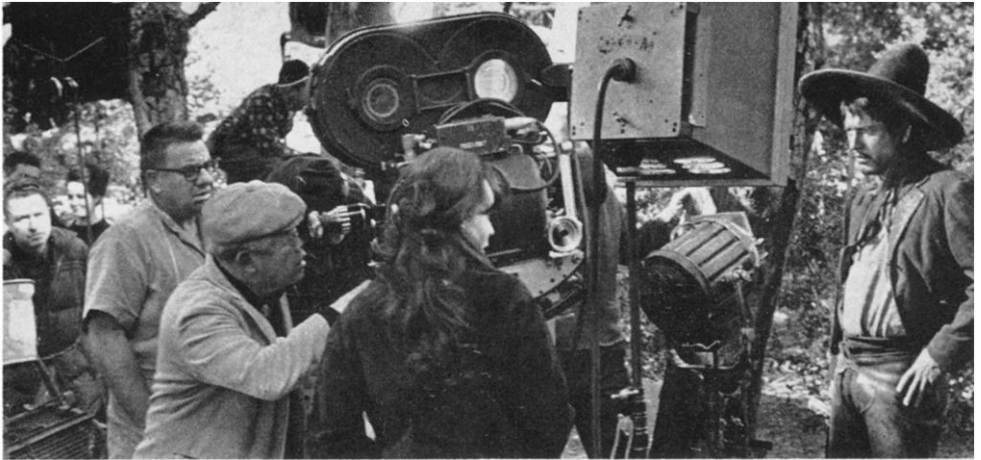
speaking of the darkness closing in, when a shadowy figure comes into frame and takes the knife out of his chest. At that point, the camera begins moving upwards. It was a tricky shot to handle. Originally, I had planned to dig a hole and shoot up past Harvey, moving the camera up past him into the mist. But the crane was so large that it would take hours for the crew to dig a hole deep enough to handle the equipment. We didn't have the time. (It's been estimated that it costs the studio about \$100 a minute to shoot a movie.) So I built a platform instead, put Harvey on top of it, hung branches over him, and packed the sides with sods of grass. I saved at least two or three hours by doing the shot this way, and I could make the move in one shot without having to cut into an optical effect. As we raised the camera up through the branches, I began to blow a mist through the trees at what appears to be a great distance away. The camera keeps going up through the mist to the clear sky, and then we started spinning it around to get the full effect of the cut. As it turned out, it was a very nice shot. We could have used it again, but when you have something good, leave it alone. In most cases you'll only over-do it.

There were times when the dramatic change of tonal values gave a nice visual effect. This happens on location a great deal. You may have visualized many things in your mind about how you're going to shoot the scene on location, but until you get there and weigh the actual values inherent in the landscape, you can't really see what you have. For example, in the scenes where Claire Bloom is walking in the desert, there were a great many weeds and tall grass. On film, I knew they would just wash out, or blend into the background; the bottom of the frame would have no definition or substance. To match my shooting up to this point, I had to keep using the sharp extremes, omitting all half-tones. Claire Bloom was dressed all in white, and her face was covered by the white veil. In order to get the right exposure, I had to hold the background down. This I did by using a light red or light green filter. But because of the

poor photographic quality of the weeds, the bottom portion of the frame would not equal the top half in light intensity. To compensate for this, I had to paint those weeds with aluminum spray paint. When the sun hit them, they glistened. In this way I could keep the "hot" frame, which would be dramatically contrasted with the dark tones used at the trial. A little effect, I admit, probably not even noticed, yet I think it enriches the scene, makes it stand out a little more. I make it a point to always carry cans of aluminum, black, and tan spray paint whenever I go on location. Only when I look through the view finder can I see these things. Then I want to bring them out, and if need be, change their values. Some photographers say they paint with light. I like to say I paint with spray paint in order to improve nature a little bit for our purposes. You just don't find everything you want on location. I even sprayed some rocks black because I didn't want to use any half-tones. When Carrasco is lying under the shade of the cactus, out of the hot sun, I found that the rocks were giving off too much light. I wanted to create an area of coolness in the hot desert. He was in a relatively black area, yet you never lost sight of him, because I played the black off against the light background.

All of us, I think, at one time or another, are tied down to an idea. We think there is only one dramatic and effective way to shoot a scene. But as much as we want to believe this, we all know, deep down, that it is not the best way to make films. Marty had certain ideas about a special shot, or actor's movements that he wanted to use. But when he got on the set, he found they weren't right, and he had to alter them. Whatever his idea, he is one director who is not going to be tied down to any preconceived idea. He's very flexible, and he will be the first to admit that perhaps his way is wrong. I've worked with directors who go home and study the script until they get an idea of how to shoot the scene. The next day they go on the set and insist that the scene be shot that way. When it gets bogged down, and they have trouble, they can't figure out why it hap-

Ritt, Howe,
Bloom
and
Newman



pened. If the director insists that certain ideas should be put together in a certain prescribed way, he's only putting stumbling blocks in front of himself. He's not a live director; today you have to be more flexible. Especially, since we've become so dependent on tools and instruments and techniques. You cannot tie yourself to the machine. You must free yourself from the machine. You must dictate to the machine, you mustn't let the machine dictate to you. In *The Outrage* we shot scenes with a hand-held camera, we walked with the camera; we used an 8-inch lens, a 10-inch lens. I even had a lens which we couldn't rack out far enough because it would fall off. So I took a piece of cardboard and taped the lens down, then slipped it out far enough until it was in the proper focus. We made it work. We couldn't follow focus at all, but we could make the shot. And that's the important thing. I refuse to say to the director, look, I can't shoot this scene because I don't have a lens here which stays on the camera. That's why I spent so many years learning technique. There's more than one approach to anything. I know I can photograph a picture one way and someone else will photograph it in a different way. The only criterion is whether you retain the dramatic value. Let the audience and critics judge whether you do a scene correctly or not. Even if we shoot a scene one way, we never know how it's going to look until it's put together. Who's going to know whether a picture is great until it's played before an audience?

There are times when I feel I must suggest to Marty that he should have a certain shot to cover himself from another angle. I must let him know that he might be overlooking something. Whenever I say something, he's always open and direct; if he likes the suggestion he'll use it; if he doesn't, he won't. But he will always listen. The editor might want another angle, but he's not making the film for the editor. We discuss our ideas there, on the set. There's only that one moment to make your decision. And the way the director feels at that moment is what really excites him to do the scene that way. It's the spontaneity of the moment which is so exciting. You can't predetermine a scene with a certain idea; you've got to be flexible enough to adapt yourself to any change required.

Years ago I made a film about a fighter called *Body and Soul*. Our camera equipment at that time was bulky and awkward. I wanted to get as close as I could to the fighters. I wanted to shoot with a mobile camera, one that would be so flexible that it would register the feelings of the fighters to the audience. I wanted the camera to move with complete freedom. If the fighter was knocked down, I wanted to see the overhead lights as he fell. I couldn't do that with the big camera. So I got the idea of pulling the camera off the tripod and holding it in my hands. And for complete mobility, I put on a pair of roller skates, so I could move with the fighters. It was just sheer chance that I thought of using the skates. A

few weeks before we were going to shoot the sequence, I was driving along and I saw some children skating down the sidewalk. And it clicked; it was what I was searching for. I knew I could never predetermine the exact moments I would have to move the camera to keep up with the fighters. Now, when I wanted to move the camera, I could move it. If the fighters moved, I could move right with them. If I hadn't seen those children, well, who knows how we might have shot the scene.

I think there were many exciting moments in *The Outrage*. Over-all, I think we did a very good job. When I look at my contribution in the final film, I know I could have improved certain moments. But when you're making a film, you make it the way you feel at that moment. The same way with the writer, the director, or the actor. Certain scenes we shot at the railroad station I'm not happy with, but when you're working on a multi-million-dollar picture you just get on the set and begin working. You don't stop and say, wait a minute, give me an hour and I'll think this over. You go ahead and make the picture, and for that moment when you're lighting, you begin to feel the thing. Many times it doesn't come off the way you had visualized it. It doesn't matter that Marty and I talked about what we were going to do before we began shooting. Everyone has certain ideas they want to try out. The same thing applies to the actors. Paul Newman demands two weeks of rehearsal before the picture begins. Many times he receives no pay, but he does it to acquaint himself with the part before he gets on the set. Even though he's intellectually prepared, when he comes on the set there's an entirely new feeling. He has make-up on; the other actors have their make-up on. There are lights, the camera, sound technicians, light technicians, prop men, set decorators, assistant directors, script girls, everyone concerned about what they are doing. To an outsider, a movie set is all noise, chaos and confusion. But, whether you are an actor or a cameraman, you have to adapt to these things, as well as the physical demands of the location, or the requirements of the camera and

so on. Everyone on the set feels the same way. I've never made a picture where I felt that I achieved one hundred per cent of what I set out to accomplish. And I hope I never do, because there's no where to go. I don't want a film I photograph to be pure perfection. I must have a little imperfection in there to give it reality. Reality is not pure perfection.

No matter how hard we try, we always seem to make mistakes. When Marty made *The Outrage* he had a certain idea, a certain concept, and he wanted to see his ideas materialize. If there are shortcomings in this film, I'm sure Marty will be the first to admit it. I think he learned a great deal from doing this film. The only way we can grow is by learning. Today, you just can't play it safe. You've got to have the courage of your convictions. If you're going to make a mistake, you must make your own, but I'll guarantee that you won't make the same mistake over again. I know it was a great challenge for Marty to make *The Outrage*, but it was his statement and he has to live with it. Yet, we can all learn something from it. If we don't have people like Marty Ritt to make pictures like this, what are we going to do? How are we going to advance the art of motion pictures? If Hollywood keeps on making the little trite pictures, then how can any of us grow? That's why you have to have young people with a fresh mind, a fresh vision, with the courage to go out and make something a little different. A lot of times what they're reaching for doesn't make it. But so what. You learn from it, you grow from it. That's why it's wonderful to work with someone like Marty Ritt. He gambles, and he's got the courage to go ahead and do something he believes in. A lot of people may or may not like *The Outrage*. But a lot of people are going to learn something from it. It's not just doing a trick shot because it's tricky. With a camera you can do almost anything. You can shoot a scene upside down, but it doesn't mean anything except that it puts the wrong shot in the wrong place at the wrong time. In the future, there will be new cameras, new types of lens, new types of film. Science will always be there to

build us the new equipment, but then it's in our hands. We must master the technique in order to master the machine. And it's what we do with it that will determine the way of the future.

THE EDITOR

"Editing is the foundation of film art," wrote Pudovkin, and certainly the precept is still honored today. But the manipulation of film in the moviola is only one integral part of the vast technological process which is the making of a film. This, of course, does not deny the importance of the film editor; rather, it places him in proper perspective. General structure is determined by the writer; but clearly, it is the editor who will pace the film, making transitions clean and continuous, or abrupt and shocking, breathing life into the film as a visual structure.

Martin Ritt is one of the few Hollywood directors who demands, and receives, the privilege of controlling the cutting—and the "final cut" of the released version—of his own films.

Frank Santillo, whom he chose to carry out this crucial aspect of the production, had worked with, and assisted, Slavko Vorkapich, often referred to as the "father of the Hollywood montage." (The association with Vorkapich has resulted in his becoming somewhat of a specialist in "montage.") Santillo edited Peckinpah's RIDE THE HIGH COUNTRY, and recently cut the train sequence in HOW THE WEST WAS WON, certainly the most exciting episode in that film.

When I'm assigned to a picture, I can usually read the script and more or less visualize how it's going to be shot, even how it's going to fit together. But it was different with *The Outrage*. I had never encountered this type of picture before. The prospect of having to cut sequences of flashback within flashback seemed so enormous that I had doubts about even doing it. I'd just come off a conventional Western, and when I read the script I knew it was going to be a very tough film. I had never worked with Marty Ritt before, but by reputation I knew he was a master. I knew too, that he would do this film the way *he* wanted to do it, not the way anyone else might want to.

My main concern was how he was going to do it. That's why I had a slight case of butterflies in my stomach when I went into the studio on Monday morning. But the minute I walked in, with the script under my arm, Marty looked at me, grinned, and said: "It's a weird one, isn't it?" From that moment on, I knew we would get along well. In his own way he was telling me that he too was somewhat frightened, somewhat unsure as to what he wanted to do. I've never had the chance to work so closely with a director before. I felt we were doing this film together, and whatever the problems, I knew we would make it. Marty made it easy for me.

At his suggestion, I went on location in Tucson for a week so I would be familiar with the way he was shooting the film. He shot the posse and buggy scenes while I was there. We talked about the film a great deal, and he explained what he was trying to do, what he was trying to say with the film. But, he made it clear that this was going to be his film, done in his way. Whatever the outcome, whether it was a success or failure, would rest on nobody's shoulders but his own. I was happy to hear this, because I feel the director should cut the picture. He's the man who creates it, who transforms it into film, and therefore he is the one who knows more about it than anyone else. If you don't give the picture to the man who makes it then I think you're in trouble. Most of the films made in Hollywood today are not completed by the men who should complete them. Usually, the director has the right of the first cut, and that's all. [After that the producer or studio can make changes at will.] The director and editor only have about a week together. The cutter puts the film together, and if there are any problems, the director will look at the film and try to straighten it out. But he's usually off the picture by that time, and he considers the film as something in the past. That's why *The Outrage* was different; it was a new way for me to work. I was there all the time, watching the film shape and form itself under the eyes of the man who made it.

After Tucson, I went back home. The gen-

eral procedure was that while Marty was still shooting, he would send the dailies to the studio for developing, and then they would be returned to him to see if any retakes were needed. After he viewed them, he returned them to me so I could assemble them in a rough sequential order. Sometimes he would have some suggestions about which takes to use, or which takes to transfer. But the actual construction would begin after he returned from location.

When I received the film, I could see that he was literally cutting the film in the camera. There was a lot of film, but it was mostly the same angles with two or three different takes. He knew precisely how that film was going to cut together. Everything in the film went together beautifully. But even though he was cutting in the camera, he was fully covered. There weren't two or three or even four takes from different angles, like some directors shoot. A lot of directors are extremely talented, but I've never seen them get as much economy out of a film the way Marty did in *The Outrage*.

After he got back, we sat down in the projection room and ran all the dailies which I had, by that time, assembled. We had one of those projectors that you can stop and start at will, running the film backwards and forwards. We ran all the circled takes, and then concentrated on the first reel. Sometimes, he would say let's look at the out-takes for a particular scene. He remembered certain things about a shot, and sometimes he didn't see those shots on the reels. He has a tremendous memory for shots. In a sequence he would say that's the best shot, and he didn't even bother to look at the other takes. Or, in other shots, he saw that half of one take was good, but not the other half. So he would say cut the first part of take one, with the last half of take three. He always seemed to know that he would eventually use the best takes. As we sat there, he would say we're going to cut here to get us into another story, or cut here for another angle. It was as if he intuitively knew all along how the final film was going to look. All his transitions worked very well, and we didn't need one dissolve in the

entire film. Sometimes, working with other directors, you're unsure as to how they want the film cut. They themselves don't seem to know. They figure it's the editor's job to show them how the film is going to look. I agree, yet at the same time, I disagree with this attitude. I agree because without some direction, or point of view, the editor can wallow in confusion for weeks on end not knowing whether he's doing the film in the right way. You can finish a cut the way you think it should be. But when the director or producer or executive comes in to screen the cut with you, they feel that it should be done somewhat differently. Yet they don't seem to know what they want you to do to change it. They just feel it's not right, and they offer no concrete suggestions on how to correct it. That's when everyone thinks they might have the solution, and so you have to try it about three or four different ways. It ends up being what I term a "committee" film, with the end result that everything is a textural dilemma. Portions of the film will have mood and flavor, while other parts will go by so fast you don't even know what's happening. By the same token, when someone stands over you cutting each frame, watching each splice, the editor is reduced to little more than a mechanic. And, in the long run, the film winds up losing its originality and freshness. Marty was great because he combined both ways. He left me alone to cut certain sequences after carefully going over with me what he wanted, what point he wanted to build to, and what shots he felt were right to get us in or out of the sequence. I had something solid to go by, and I went and cut it the way I felt it should go. When we ran the sequence, he would leave portions of what I had done, or else he would have definite changes that he wanted made. After I made them, we would run it again until he was completely satisfied with what was there. He never stood over me except when I was having trouble, and then I asked him to be there. We made our decisions right there at the moviola. The main thing I was interested in was whether or not it worked in the moviola.

You'll find that most directors are consistent in the way they cut the film. They'll run the picture in a rough-cut stage, then give the editor notes on what takes should be added, or deleted, or suggest certain shifts in sequences. But they always work towards the conclusion of the film, adding new sequences, or dropping them because of length. After a certain period of time they get to the point where everything is working. Then they begin to give it pace, tightening it up, and so on, until the picture is locked. Marty works differently. He locks the film a reel at a time, and he would not go on to the next reel until that one reel was completed. There is no such thing as a rough-cut stage with him. A rough-cut reel, but not a picture. Whether this is his normal way of working, a carry-over from live TV, or whether he did it just on *The Outrage*, I don't know.

I assembled the reels according to the script, trying to weed out all the bad takes, using only the good ones. Then we ran a reel, and he would tell me what he wanted, how he wanted to build to a certain point, and so on. It was difficult for me because it was such a strange film. How do you assemble a dialogue scene for example? You have many angles, a master shot, takes on the principal actors, point-of-view shots, and insert shots. If you wanted to, you could just use the master shot and have the scene. Well, I couldn't just assemble it, I had to cut it. So I went ahead and cut it. Then, we ran the sequences and he gave me his suggestions, or notes on other takes, and I made the corrections the way he wanted. But Marty gave me leeway to try and do something as I felt it. I think he wanted to be sure that he wasn't approaching this film with a closed mind; he wanted to be open for suggestions. I did the posse scene this way. When I first cut it, I selected what I thought were the best shots. There were about fifty good ones, and I thought I would save Marty the time and effort of having to go through all the posse material. I built the sequence by pacing the tempo of the shots, cutting faster and faster until I intercut with the stationary buggy. This way, after all the fast motion, the feelings were

forcibly focused on the empty buggy. But I did it out of proportion to the sequence. I was doing it only for a nice effect. Marty liked it, but pointed out that we only had to establish the feeling and violence of the posse to contrast the static quality of the buggy. So, we finally cut it down. But Marty was always willing to try things, adding a little touch here and there, which might enhance the effect of the scene. In the wife's story, Claire Bloom is kneeling before Laurence Harvey begging him to forgive what happened to her. But he refuses, and she begins to rise. Ordinarily, I would cut just as she begins her upward movement. But the tail end of the shot was very nice. She just went out of frame, leaving only a diffused close shot of her dress. It was a nice little thing, so I tried it. When Marty saw it, he liked it. So it stayed in. It just added a little mood to the shot. It seems strange, but most films don't have too much mood to enrich the atmosphere. Most movies are shot to keep the action moving from place to place. A few directors will shoot a great deal of mood material, but most of them, I think, feel they don't need it. If the film is over-length, or if something has to be cut, the mood things will be the first to go. Marty has some wonderful mood things. Those beautiful slow dollies at the railroad station give a wonderful feeling. They capture, in a way, the dampness and loneliness of the three men. So I played those scenes in the beginning for as much mood as possible.

From the opening — the station set



There were many problems on *The Outrage* from the editorial standpoint. One of them occurred during the husband's sequence. The Indian is trying to remember what the husband had told him just before he died. The scene was simply there to establish the fact that the Indian had come across the husband while he was dying. Now, the Indian was relating the story to the court, and when his memory failed, the husband's voice took over. But it was the opening, when the Indian begins his story, that gave us the trouble. The Indian was shot two ways; one, a medium close shot, clear and crisp. Every detail of his face, the ground, was clearly accentuated. The other way was a high reverse angle, shot over his shoulder, looking into the sun. With the sun's reflections, this shot was somewhat distorted. Both shots were essential because they were to be the transition shots between the husband and the Indian. But these two shots didn't match, either in tone or mood. Every time we cut, we went from fantasy to realism. It didn't work. So I told Marty that we could blow up part of the frame of the realistic shot, thus making it an extreme close shot of the Indian in order to keep the mood, while omitting the realistic highlights. There are times when you have to do things to a film after it's shot to make a sequence work. And when the optical department had correctly sized and matched the blow-up portion of the frame, the shot matched perfectly, and the sequence worked. We had to do the same thing with Claire Bloom to get the feeling that she's drowning. These are the little things that most people aren't familiar with, yet it can often make the difference between a good scene that is right, and works, and a scene that doesn't quite work. There were times when he had a sequence on the moviola that just didn't look right. Something was missing, a cut, or it was the wrong pacing, or we didn't have the cut-away we needed. Whatever it was, the scene didn't work. Then we would sit and talk over the sequence, or run some of the out-takes, or try it another way.

One place, in particular, gave us trouble. It was at the railroad station just before the pros-

pector tells his version of what really happened. It's an important scene, because the prospector is going to confess that he lied at the trial. But it was still an exposition scene, and nothing else. We played it at first in the normal way, looking at the actor who is delivering his lines. But it was dull, the action just bogged down the entire sequence. Both of us didn't like the way it was playing. We tried it a number of ways, but each time the result was the same. Finally, we were considering dropping the whole sequence, but it was too important, so we couldn't. We didn't know what to do, but then something happened quite by accident which changed the entire feeling of the scene. I was running it once more through the moviola trying to think of something to do. But somewhere along the way I lost my sync mark, so the whole scene as I was running it, was out of sync about two feet. What happened was this: the actor's dialogue was now hitting over the face of the listener. And this was the touch we needed. Marty said, "Let's try cutting the scene this way, not in the normal action/reaction way, but by letting the actor's lines fall over the listener to accentuate the lines." This way, the listener would be on camera, while the speaker would be off camera. Well, I cut it that way, and it looked and felt right. It is one of those accidents which happen occasionally that can change the entire complexion of the scene. I think it's one of the nicest little things in the film. Certainly one of the most original things. If Marty hadn't been aware of what was happening, we would have had to do it in the normal, tried-and-true way. And this brings out a certain approach to editing. If there is any basic rule in editing, as much as I hate to say that rules even exist, it is the sequences tried that *don't* work which really makes a film. Without trying things, without experimenting, there is no freshness, no spontaneity, no flavor. The same type of thing happened in the comedy scene. Marty wasn't really sure whether it would work or not. But after I assembled it, he saw it would work, so he went ahead and played it to the hilt. But these are some of the various ways that you make a

sequence work. You try things, and if need be, you doctor the footage by technical means to shape the film to suit your purpose. There is nothing which can compare with the satisfaction of seeing yourself stymied by a sequence, and then using the discipline of patience and manipulation to make that scene conform to your needs.

THE COMPOSER

Alex North is one of Hollywood's most versatile and gifted composers. Included in his list of credits are STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, DEATH OF A SALESMAN, VIVA ZAPATA, MEMBER OF THE WEDDING, THE ROSE TATTOO, and THE LONG, HOT SUMMER. (For his score on the pompous and jejune CLEOPATRA, he received an Academy Award.) Recently, he composed the music for John Ford's CHEYENNE AUTUMN, and has just completed the score for THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY.

I was asked by Marty Ritt to see *The Outrage* to consider the possibility of writing the score for it. I had seen *Rashomon*, and was greatly impressed by it. And I was interested to see what Marty had done with *The Outrage*. When I saw the film I was very impressed. It had strength, and that kind of dynamic quality that Marty infuses in all his films. Visually it was exciting, and I thought the actors did a fine job. I wasn't too pleased with the comedy sequence, however; I thought that it went too far, and detracted, rather than added to the entire film. But on the whole, I thought *The Outrage* stayed close to the original, both in style and conception. And this is what lured me into writing the score for the film. It was quite different from the *Magnificent Seven*, a score I was at one time considering writing, but which I finally refused on the grounds that I felt it strayed too far from the original. Most of all, I felt *The Outrage* would provide me with virtually a musical feast. Whenever you deal with a film that has such solid form and structure, the texture can only be enhanced by a good score if it's done right.

Music, if it is done correctly, can add an entirely new dimension to a film. It can embellish, enhance, and solidify an emotional mood that dialogue, or effects, or silences, cannot quite capture. Many times, it can help technically. If, for example, the sequences are rather abrupt, music can be a helpful bridge. Sometimes the music can alter the pace on a sequence which seems too long. The same thing applies to establishing the mood of a particular locale, in terms of visual and emotional impact. For the prime purpose of any musical score is to help the film in a dramatic way. There are many ways of doing this, and of course, that's part of the challenge in writing music for the film. For usually when the composer begins his work, the film is in its finished state. The film is "locked," or "frozen," which means simply that nothing can be changed in the picture from the visual standpoint. Many times this will provide enormous restrictions in terms of what you have to accomplish. You might have only a seventy-foot sequence to make a musical point, but a certain inflection has to be reached at a certain point, say 23 feet. So, you have to structure your music around the requirements of the scene. Yet, it is overcoming these restrictions that provides the greatest reward and personal satisfaction. Because you must make those restrictions work for you, not against you. And I think the greatest personal achievement you can get, is when you see a film you've worked on in its finished state, and not really be aware of your own contribution. If it works, it works, and you know it. It feels right. By the same token, if it's the wrong music for a particular scene, it stands out in a blatant, almost embarrassing way. In a great many pictures, the scores are over-written, and the music doesn't lend anything constructive to the film. Rather, it detracts from the film. For certain scenes have the strength to stand alone, by themselves, yet for some reason or other, people feel they have to be scored. This happens quite a bit in dialogue scenes. You have to be so delicate when you score for dialogue because you must always be careful to subordinate your music to the words the

actor speaks. It has to be treated with great care, with the proper orchestration, plus an awareness of the actor's voice range. When I scored *The Long Hot Summer*, also with Marty Ritt, I had to contend with the deep bass of Orson Welles. So I had to avoid using instruments that fell in his particular voice register: in those scenes where Welles is talking, I had to use high-pitched instruments.

The Outrage, like any film, presented its own special problems. As I mentioned, my first reaction was a positive one. And when Marty was involved with some technical things I took the opportunity to run the film by myself and take notes on where I felt the music should begin and end. That way, when Marty and I sat down to run the film, reel by reel, I would be able to discuss my ideas with him and get his reactions. I spotted a good 35 minutes of music, and briefly sketched out a few ideas and themes which I thought could be used. Since the film is almost musical in structure, I thought it would be interesting to try and encompass in each flashback, and therefore, in each relationship, a certain mood which would be a variation on a main theme. I had in mind a simple theme—what I called the “truth theme”—which would be broad enough to expand in any direction in order to capture the particular flavor of each little episode. I could begin the flashback with this theme, then expand it into the direction of the story, and then return to the main theme to end the flashback. Thus, I would end the same way I began, adding the different colors and hues which would give shading and depth to the characters. In one flashback, I could use just strings, in another, possibly brass, in another woodwinds, and so on, all containing their own individual comment on the action, all tied integrally within the body of the main theme.

I wanted to frame each flashback, to start with a piece of music that would help convey the sense that this was the past, but which, at the same time, was related to the personalities of the characters. Then, somewhere along the way I would lose the music, and pick it up later to accentuate the action. Thus, each flash-

back would be almost a self-contained unit, with a form that is musically very exciting. You can start, stop, pick it up, go back to the station to let the natural sounds take over. It would be like a musical dissolve. I had already decided that the scenes at the train station would not need any music. For then I would have to fight both the dialogue and the rain. The same problems existed in the glade, to a lesser degree, because of the waterfall. But this could always be controlled.

With the characters it was different. I don't like to approach any film with the idea that each character is reflected by one particular theme. It's too obvious, too cut-and-dried. Rather, an aspect of the personality in relation to the situation is what I try and illuminate. Claire Bloom might be the projection of the symbolic nature of purity and innocence. I had envisioned a kind of mellow, simple theme for her, which captured these attributes, but which could also be expanded during the evolution of her personality. As she walks through the glade, the veil hiding her face, I used only simple instruments, like the *oboe d'amore*, and strings, to convey her sense of innocence and frailty against the warmth and tranquility of the surroundings. It was too early in the film to establish anything which would be identifiable with her. So I made it a very simple, almost semiclassical folk piece, only adding a little romantic flavor.

With Newman, it was different. I introduce him, when he's lying in the shade, with a delicate piece, using only marimbas and tambores. There, I wanted just the soft, leisurely mood of the afternoon siesta. And this would be the natural, yet dramatic, transition leading into the sharp desire he has for the girl. It's important to use this objective approach in the beginning. For the audience has to see and associate, before they begin to identify with anybody.

As I mentioned, I had seen the possibility of utilizing 35 minutes of music. After the thunderclap in reel one, I wanted to begin with the truth theme, and sustain the chord under the narration, or start it from the first flashback,

carrying it to the end of the narration. Then I would carry the music over from reel one into reel two, with an abrupt punctuation to the dead body. Then, there was the cut back to the train station where Robinson says, "Go on, go on," at which time the music would be out. During the preacher's story I could do the same thing, all for what I thought would be a dramatic emphasis. But whatever I had intended, either by actually scoring, or sketching, or whether it was still just an idea, it was Marty's decision as to whether or not to use part or all of what I had proposed. So, with these ideas, Marty and I sat down at the moviola, and ran the film reel by reel. When we came to a spot where I wanted to use music, I stopped and explained to Marty the reasons I felt music was necessary. But it turned out that Marty had his own ideas of where the music should begin and end. And he simply said: "I don't think we need it here." So we went on into the next reel. I didn't agree with his ideas, because you must always have a reason to use music. There should never be an arbitrary spot where music should play. It's not there to cover up the camera noise, bad acting, or bad effects, although it can help in many of these instances. Marty felt the film was top notch, that it stood up without too much music, and therefore didn't need as much as I wanted to put in. So, in the final film, we ended up with just eight minutes of music.

It was rather strange, because this is the first time I've ever been caught up in this type of situation. I'm contracted to write a score, whether it's for an hour, or just two minutes. I disagreed with Marty, and I still do; I think there should have been more music. Not because I did the score, that's irrelevant, but because I felt the film needed it. Now I may be wrong; perhaps the film does stand up by itself. I've been wrong before, and I certainly expect to be wrong in the future. After all, we all learn from our mistakes. And in all honesty, I feel it's too early to tell whether I'm right, or Marty is right. The film itself can only be the final judge, the only determining factor of how much or how little music should be used. *Hud* had only

a few minutes of music. It was a success. *Through a Glass Darkly* had very little, and *Winter Light* had no music at all. Everyone searches for their own style, and perhaps the sparing use of music might become a particular stylistic stamp of the Ritt film.

Once the decision of how much music was wanted, and where it was to be placed was reached, I went to work on the score, trying to keep in as much as possible of what I had originally conceived. But now the only sustaining theme would be the girl's, because the film basically revolves around what happens to her. It's her thread which begins the entire search for what did or did not happen, and so kicks off the other stories. Her introductory theme is the integration of mood, locale, and character. Originally, I thought of using a harpsichord to capture her sense of frailty and delicacy, something which would add a pathetic sidelight. But this wouldn't work because I couldn't follow it through. You can't plant a seed which you know in advance won't grow. In one scene, where Claire Bloom runs and jumps into the water, and the natural sound takes over, the music was scored, taken out, and after a few previews put back in.

Many factors have to be weighed and analyzed during the making of the film, as to how much or how little music is to be used. But the only valid criterion, of course, is the film itself. Any film is the sum total of many individual contributions. And it has to be seen in its entirety, not just from one oblique angle of music, photography, direction, or acting. Like any work of art, it is the final product which has to be evaluated. One movement doesn't make a great symphony, and one theme doesn't make a string quartet, or cantata. *The Outrage* was a unique film for me, far different in scope, in structure, in style, in form, from most of the other films I've worked on. When I saw the completed film, at two previews in San Francisco and Berkeley, I had mixed feelings. I liked the style, and the strength and vitality of the film, as well as the message and close adherence paid to the original. On the other hand,

I didn't care for the comedy sequence. I thought the farce was slightly overdone, and somehow rather unbelievable. (And I'm not the only one who felt that way.) Yet, up to a point, the scene worked. When Newman and Harvey start chasing each other around, and jump into the water, I think it just went too far. Certain moments are brilliantly done, with flavor, texture, and mood. They remind me of certain foreign films. And, this to me, is certainly rewarding. It's about time that someone started taking something worthwhile from other people, and incorporating it into our so-called Hollywood-type film. It can do nothing but improve our standards, our sense of taste, and eventually, I hope, our own criteria of making American films that are meaningful and relevant to our time.

THE DIRECTOR

Martin Ritt is perhaps the most versatile member of the group of directors who have achieved prominence in Hollywood after beginning with live TV in New York. His past films convey the gropings of a personal style, and clearly indicate his willingness to experiment, either with material, actors, or technique. After the critical and commercial success of HUD, Ritt was able to command complete control over his next film. Rarely, in Hollywood, is this power accorded to a director.

Ritt was born in New York in 1920, and was educated at St. John's University. He began in show business as an actor, in Odets' *GOLDEN BOY*. Soon after, while still acting, he turned to directing, his most important production being Arthur Miller's *A MEMORY OF THE MONDAYS*, and *A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE*. He acted in approximately 150 television plays and has directed almost 100. In 1956, after his television production of Robert Alan Aurthur's *A VERY SPECIAL BABY*, which he also produced for the stage, he made his first film, *EDGE OF THE CITY* (also known as *A MAN IS TEN FEET TALL*) which met with critical favor. Other films include: *NO DOWN PAYMENT*, *THE BLACK ORCHID*, *THE LONG, HOT SUMMER*, *THE SOUND AND THE FURY*, *FIVE BRANDED WOMEN*, *PARIS BLUES*, *ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG MAN*, and *HUD*. Ritt is now in England shooting *THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD*, starring Richard Burton.

A lot of projects were offered to me after the success of *Hud*. But none of them really struck me as being bold enough, or imaginative enough, to make the kind of film I wanted. Then, when I was vacationing with my wife, I received the first 50 pages of *The Outrage*. I had always been fascinated by *Rashomon*: I considered it then, as now, a cinematic masterpiece. My first reaction to *The Outrage* was somewhat ambivalent. I think that was tempered by my feeling toward *Rashomon*. But the more I thought about doing it, the more intrigued I became. The characters were interesting, and multidimensional. But more important, the form of the film, and the intellectual content, kept drawing me to it, attracting me almost like a magnet. And the more I thought about doing the film, the more interested and excited I became. But I had to be careful and weigh my initial response. I had to make sure my reaction was valid, and not cluttered up with the emotional residue of *Rashomon*. The first thing I look for in any film property is emotion; or any genuine intellectual stimulation. And this I like to coordinate with strength and simplicity and visual style. *The Outrage* stimulated me more than any property I had received.

But the more I thought about making the film, the more I realized its implications. The whole treatise on the nature of truth became a contemporary and social issue especially valid today. We live in a country where issues seem to have become simplified. Most people seem to want things in terms of black and white. I wanted the people, the general public, to be aware that issues, people, even events, are not either black or white, but are located in a spectrum containing various gradations of black and white. And the film is, in my opinion, the best vehicle to reach the people. It's a mass medium. People have to respond to films—emotionally, intellectually, and aesthetically—for any criterion of movie art to be established. There have been films that were not mass films, remarkably well done, even important, but they lack that something which distinguished them

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from being truly great films. Film art has to be enjoyed to be valid, and it should contain that spark which makes a person contemplate, reflect on his own life, and the lives of others. It must be a *total* experience, on all levels.

Rarely, I felt, would I have the chance to make a film that was so intellectually stimulating; that was, at the same time, both high-brow and low-brow. Above all, *The Outrage* was a great challenge, for it was a film that demanded a definite, disciplined kind of artistic style.

I was still nagged by my doubts, however. Remaking an accepted classic is a dangerous thing, and I was fully aware of those hazards when I decided to do the film. In all honesty, I think I have never approached a film which frightened me so much. The problems, in terms of depth of portrayal, the cinematic potential, the content, and of course, the remaking of an accepted classic, all entered into it. On this last point, even though the subject matter is the same, it's what we bring to it *today* that makes it valid. We bring our own interpretations, our own personality, to the classic; we make it significant, vital, and personal to the time in which we live.

Even before I began the film, I was warned by certain critics that they were going to pan the film. I found this to be an extremely negative attitude. It got my back up a little. If I had done *Hamlet*, or made a film of *Macbeth*, like Kurosawa, I don't think anybody would have jumped down my throat. Kurosawa remade a number of classics and changed them into the Japanese idiom. I realize that transposing one medium into another changes the value of the work. But if you can do it with novels and plays, why can't you do it with film? I think it's childish to condemn this. I would never condemn conductors who might want to conduct Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, or Bach a shade differently. It's their interpretation which is important, and *that* is what should be judged. It's true that *Rashomon* is a classic, a great and brilliant film. But its very nature makes it universal. And Kurosawa's way is not the only way of making it, just as Gielgud's



Ritt directing Bloom and Newman

interpretation of *Hamlet* is not the only way of doing that. Now that I'm finished with the film, I am sure there are several other ways to make it. There are a myriad ways to do anything. If there were not, then the artist wouldn't exist, because the artist brings his personal touch, his outlook, his *Weltanschauung* to the work.

I wanted *The Outrage* to be a popular film. I knew it might be difficult material for the mass audience. I won't compromise in terms of content because I don't believe in playing down to an audience. But I wanted to find a theatrical way of reaching them.

Kanin, Lubin and I wanted this to be an American film—a film people could identify with and understand. And, for that reason, we chose the West as our locale. It's the nearest thing to myth we have, and it is the classic idiom. The West also has such a classic, almost formal beauty. Looking for the right location posed somewhat of a problem. But the minute I stepped into the kind of natural forest of cacti around Tucson, I suddenly knew that I was surrounded by the intrinsic core of this film. It was filled with symbolic overtones. And this is when I really realized what this film is all about. It had that kind of misty, almost surreal quality which veiled everything. And you notice, when Claire Bloom goes by and Carrasco first sees her, I zoom in to her face. I wanted her face to be as veiled as possible. The foreground of the natural forest started behind the tree,

ending with another kind of cactus. All of this veiled. And the location enabled me to shoot the film this way, with everything slightly veiled. When I got to the courtroom scene, I knew I had to pick a spot where the sun would go visually against the scene, where the entire audience at the trial would be in complete silhouette. It gave me that quality of extremes which I needed. Anytime I wanted, I could go to that close shot of Newman's bare head when I cut back to the trial. That way I would have a completely different quality.

I had envisioned the film in a series of elements. Every story had to have its own style, its own sense of character. So I looked for the physical elements which could convey this. For instance, I knew right away that in the posse scene, I was going to shoot the posse's hoofs, and legs and shanks and heads and then cut as they got to the wagon. I knew I was going to go from an extreme long shot to eyes and tears dropping. I knew I was going to have to dig holes for the camera. (Never in my life have I dug so many holes to get where I had to shoot!) As I was shooting the film, I knew that I wasn't going to use any dissolves, just cuts. I had a complicated situation to deal with. Going in and out of flashbacks and doing flashbacks within flashbacks. I decided to create a convention of cutting from extreme close-up to extreme long shot and vice versa. I felt this gave the cutting a style. Some people say the film is confusing because of the cutting. I don't think it is at all. I think just about everyone understands the way it goes.

Originally, I wanted to make a film that would be larger than life. Not a realistic film, but a real film. This film is real, but it is highly selective. I show only what I feel absolutely necessary to the fabric of the scene. This means, if I was shooting in a room, and there's a large clock on the wall, all I need to show to make the scene effective would be the second hand. Just that element, and I let the audience's imagination fill in the rest.

This type of thinking applies to the actors as well. I cast actors to the key scene. I wouldn't

cast an actor to play *Hamlet* unless I thought he could play the soliloquies. I cast Larry Harvey because I knew he would play the last sequence colorfully. Claire Bloom has a certain style, a quality, grace, that almost mystical, enigmatic beauty which is so appealing, so feminine. These are the key factors. The rest I can worry about later.

Paul Newman, one of the best actors around, was a bit different. I have enormous respect for him. As an actor he is not afraid to take a chance, to do the unexpected. But when I offered him the part, he hesitated, then backed down. So we tried to get Brando. But, for some reason or other, he didn't want to do it. Then, Newman changed his mind, and looked at the part as perhaps his greatest challenge, the real test to see just how versatile an actor he is. "If I'm going to get clobbered," he said, "I might as well do it with this film. So, I'll do it. There's something vital and exciting about putting your head on the butcher's block. It makes you get out of that rut of security you sometimes find yourself in." And I felt the same way. He's my friend, I respect him as an artist, and I think he did a remarkable job. We've worked a lot together, and we like to work with each other. We come from the same background. We like to improvise, and there was a great deal of that on the set. However, in virtually all cases where the camera and the camera alone could tell the story, the camera positions and movement were predetermined by me. On the other hand, in the scenes where the inner life of the actor might possibly force him into unimagined moves or positions, I would very often follow the impulse of my actors. I won't let the actor do his own blocking because I feel I can see more of the over-all picture than he can. But, if in the course of staging a scene, the actor says, well I don't feel this, I want to move on this line, I'd say, try it, let's see what happens. It is vitally important that the actor embody the content of the scene. And, for that same reason, there are times when I will print a scene that is not technically perfect, because the actor

has captured everything I wanted him to illuminate.

Whenever you make a film, there are so many problems which confront you that you have to be able to sift and weigh each problem as you come to it. The comedy sequence is a prime example. People either liked it or hated it. I was a little uncertain myself when it actually came time to shoot it. But, I had to make my choice. So I approached the scene in what I thought to be the most logical way. The prospector's story really shatters the other stories. Now, the Japanese short story was apparently written in a somewhat bitter, angry tone. The judge asks the woodcutter, "Are you sure this is the truth, or are you saying it just to protect yourself?" When Kurosawa made the film, though I've never discussed this with him, I feel he wanted to make an affirmative ending to the story. And to achieve this positive feeling, he introduced a different element into the last fight. It was farce, which became accentuated by those broad, sweeping gestures peculiar to the Japanese. I had already staged one fight in the film in which I utilized every conceivable element in the glade: stones, rope, mud, water, and so on. Since I didn't have the formal element to work with, like the Japanese swords and gestures, I knew the comedy fight would be almost impossible. I had no idea of what I could do except repeat a fight, or a version of that fight and just hope the characters would balance those elements out. But it dawned on me that there was a dramatic way to round out the stories. The very nature, the core of truth is really subjective; the film says that the truth means something different to each person. And once I started the prospector's version of the fight, I couldn't go back. I had to carry it through, to the extreme if necessary, for it illuminates the prospector's personality as well as rounding out the story. I couldn't cheat it. The scene was farcical, so I played it as farcical as I could. I knew, and Michael Kanin knew, that there was a great deal of objection to this particular scene in the theater. People either liked it or didn't like it.

At the previews, the scene everyone liked the best, or the worst, was this final scene. And if there is a scene which stands out, either in a positive or negative sense, then the people are bound to discuss it. They want to know why it was this way, and this, of course, is the very essence of the film. We might have violated the film by playing this scene as we did. I don't know. I don't think we did. I only know that once I decided to do it this way, I had to go all the way. When I cut the sequence, it felt right. Every cut worked out just the way I had envisioned it. This happens quite a bit to the people who got their training in live television.

The training I received in live TV was extremely valuable. You were forced to cut on the air, and this created the need for severe discipline in visual movement. And you only had one chance to make it. Even now it's almost impossible for me *not* to cut a film as I shoot it. Live TV gave me a perspective on film making that I couldn't have received any other way.

In one case the design of an entire sequence was altered. That was the place where I go from Newman saying, "I didn't kill her," to the preacher sitting by the fire. I had originally designed the shot so the camera would be shooting up through the fire into a nicely framed three-shot. But when we went to cut the sequence, it didn't work. It dragged, the pace was all wrong. It was the ordinary, safe way to cover the scene. So I went with the idea that the camera should be on somebody else all the time the other person was talking. It wasn't the normal action/reaction motif. Rather it was reading what the person was saying by the facial expressions of the listener. I literally forced my way out of the ordinary approach. And I think that this little sequence is one of the best in the film. It's clean, clear, and avoids all the traps which many directors fall into without even realizing it. It was the way it was done, with ordinary film, which made it into something.

Most of the critics have rejected *The Outrage*. Some of them simply ignore the creative elements in the film. Yet I can look at *The Out-*

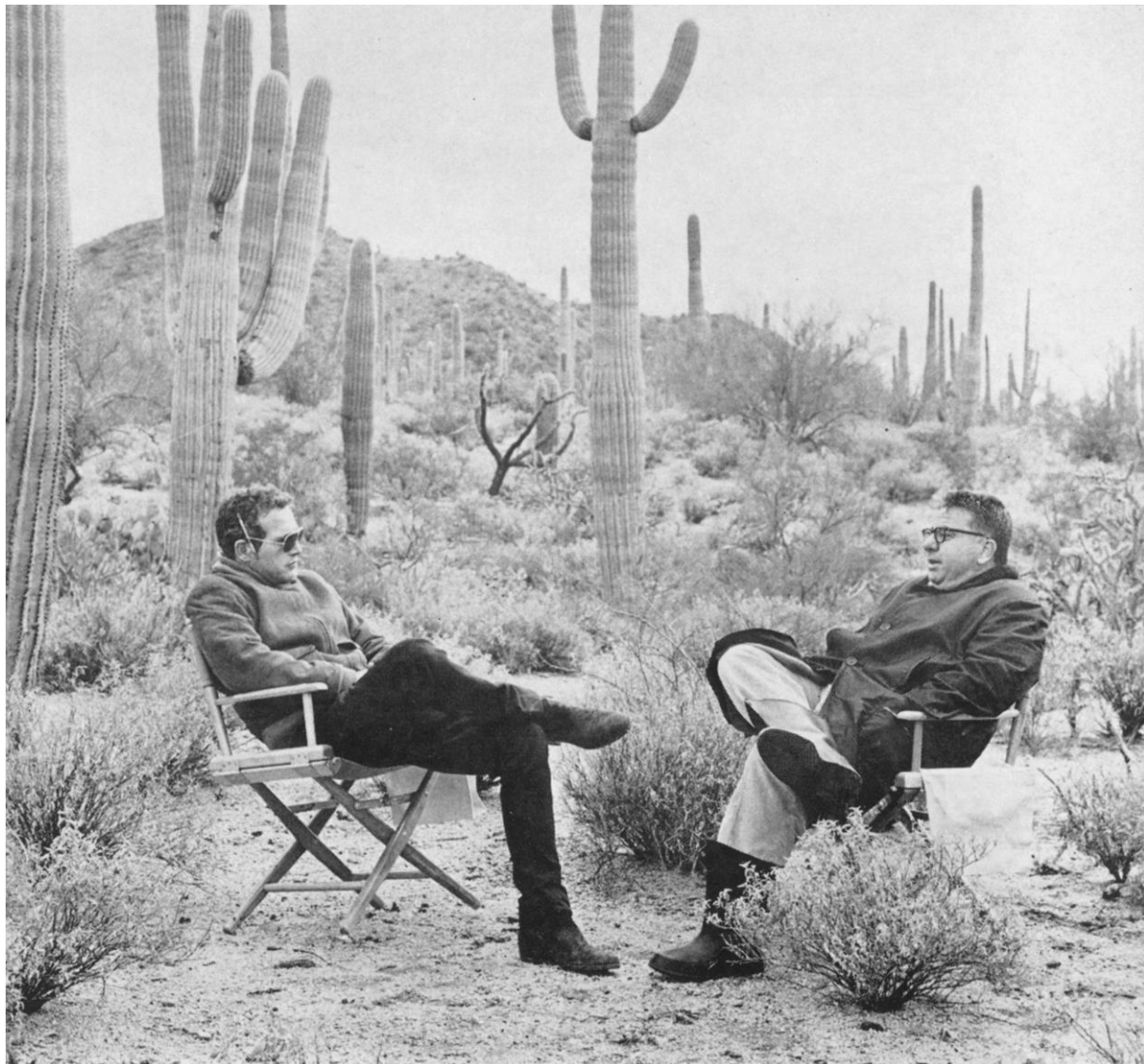
rage, and I see things, good things, which have never even been mentioned: the editing, acting, or the visuals. And yet I don't know whether a creative person is the best judge of his work. D. H. Lawrence once said: "Never trust the artist. Trust the tale. The proper function of the critic is to save the tale from the artist who created it." Now, whether he meant this in jest, or in earnest, doesn't really matter. What is important is that the tale, or film, be judged on the validity of the execution, the interpretation. I haven't read any serious review of *The Outrage*. Some people liked it, others disliked it. That's their prerogative. But when I read a review that says this would be a good film if the other film hadn't been made, what can I say? There were several bitter notices about the acting. But I think everyone did a first-class job. A critic is a human being, and therefore entitled to his opinion, right or wrong, good or bad. That again, of course, is what *The Outrage* is all about. For instance, I recently read a long and thoughtful review of *Hud*. The critic found things which other critics didn't find, very perceptive things. But she said one thing that was terrible. She said *Hud* was made by Jewish film-makers, and this, to her mind, satisfactorily explained her concept that we deliberately and shrewdly had chosen the execution of the cattle to exploit the mass feelings of the horror and revulsion associated with the concentration camps. That never even occurred to me. But I can see how she might have arrived at her conclusion. At one of the showings, I happened to be sitting next to a girl who had escaped from Germany during the war. And when that scene came on, she couldn't look at it because it reminded her of a moment in her life which she will never be able to forget. But until that moment, I had never even remotely associated that scene with the concentration camps. And yet the critic said I did it purposely because it would be exploitable. Now she's very bright, and if she's going to come to a conclusion like that, the least she can do is call me and ask: "Is that what you really meant in that scene?" And I'd tell her no,

I was simply showing cattle being slaughtered. In this case the critic had chosen a specific that questioned my artistic honesty. That seems cavalier to me.

I don't mind a bad review if it's substantiated and takes the film seriously. I may not agree with it, but it certainly is a valid point of view. A good critic will make an artist conscious of things he may have taken for granted, or failed to take into consideration. One critic asked why I changed the ending of the film to bring in the baby. Now what can I say to that? Unfortunately, that's the way many of the reviews have been.

But by and large I think *The Outrage* is successful. I think the sequences work, and there are a lot of marvelous moments in it. It is entertaining, and it doesn't compromise with its statement. Some things, I know, slowed it down, like the unveiling of the story which takes place at the station. I would have loved to shoot the entire episode on location. But we couldn't wait for rain, and so, physically, it doesn't have the strength and clarity you can achieve on location. I would not be afraid to measure what exists in this film physically against any American film. But regardless of whether the film is well received or not, the lessons I learned from it were extremely valuable.

In terms of physical manipulation of all the paraphernalia which goes hand in hand with the Hollywood system of film-making, this film was a breakthrough for me. I'd never before done some of the things I did in this picture. Friends said to me: "I hope this film doesn't fail because you may never have the courage to do those things again." In the essential structure of American film-making, the emphasis has always been, and will continue to be, on the commercial success of the film. The studios don't care how many good or bad notices a film receives. All they want is for the picture to return the initial investment and make a profit. There is nothing so thick as the hide of an American dollar. When a film does not succeed financially, the maker of the film always places his career in jeopardy. But whatever the finan-



cial success of this film, the making of it has been, in many ways, its own reward. No matter what the critics say, no matter whether it's well received or not, *The Outrage* gave me the courage to assault what many believe to be an invincible shield in Hollywood.

My next film is *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*. I like what it has to say. And I'm

going to shoot it so that it will be rough and strong and bitter and critical and tough and sharp. I'm not going to be afraid to take those extra chances. I won't be afraid to avoid the easy, safe way of making the film. I'm not going to be afraid of what the critics might say. I only hope I don't lose my nerve.